

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A soft target tissue localization device comprising:  
2 a bioabsorbable element locatable at a soft target tissue site of a patient; and  
3 said bioabsorbable element being of a material which is palpably harder than  
4 the surrounding soft tissue at the soft target tissue site.
- 1 2. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element has a  
2 hardness of at least about 1.5 times as hard as breast tissue.
- 1 3. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element swells  
2 about 50 to 1500 percent from a pre-delivery state to a post delivery state when placed in  
3 contact with an aqueous liquid.
- 1 4. The device according to claim 3 wherein the bioabsorbable element has a  
2 longest dimension of at least about 0.5cm when in the post-delivery state.
- 1 5. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element comprises  
2 a bioabsorbable filament.
- 1 6. The device according to claim 1 further comprising a marker element in  
2 contact with the bioabsorbable element.
- 1 7. The device according to claim 6 wherein the marker element is a radiopaque  
2 marker element.
- 1 8. The device according to claim 6 wherein the marker element is located  
2 generally centrally within the bioabsorbable element.
- 1 9. The device according to claim 6 wherein the marker element is a radiopaque  
2 marker element located generally centrally within the bioabsorbable element.
- 1 10. The device according to claim the 6 wherein the marker element is a  
2 permanent marker element.

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1 11. The device according to claim the 6 wherein the marker element is a  
2 temporary marker element.

1 12. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element has  
2 margins, said margins being roughened so to help prevent migration of the bioabsorbable  
3 element within soft tissue of a patient.

1 13. The device according to claim 12 wherein the bioabsorbable element has  
2 filaments extending from the margins.

1 14. The device according to claim 13 wherein the filaments are of same material  
2 as the bioabsorbable element.

1 15. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element is  
2 remotely visualizable in its post-delivery state by at least one of ultrasound, mammography  
3 and MRI.

1 16. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element is softer in  
2 a post-delivery state than in a pre-delivery state.

1 17. The device according to claim 1 wherein the bioabsorbable element is of a  
2 different hardness in a post-delivery state as in a pre-delivery state.

1 18. A medical device comprising a locatable bioabsorbable element configured for  
2 positioning at a biopsy site at the time of taking a tissue sample from the biopsy site.

1 19. A biopsy localization method comprising:  
2 taking a tissue sample from a biopsy site within a patient;  
3 positioning a bioabsorbable element at the biopsy site;  
4 testing the tissue sample; and  
5 if the testing indicates a need to do so relocating the biopsy site by finding the  
6 bioabsorbable element by palpation of the patient to feel the bioabsorbable element.

1 20. The method according to claim 19 wherein the positioning step is carried out  
2 using said bioabsorbable element and a radiopaque marker.

1 21. The device according to claim the 20 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a permanent marker element.

1 22. The device according to claim the 20 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a temporary marker element.

1 23. The method according to claim 19 wherein the remotely visualizing step is  
2 carried out to by at least one of ultrasound, mammography and MRI.

1 24. The method according to claim 19 further comprising the step of selecting the  
2 bioabsorbable element so that after positioning at the target site, the bioabsorbable element  
3 has a hardness of at lease about 1.5 times as hard as the surrounding tissue.

1 25. The method according to claim 19 further comprising the step of effectively  
2 preventing blood from contacting the bioabsorbable element until the bioabsorbable element  
3 is positioned at the target site, the effectively preventing step being carried out by using a  
4 hemostatic bioabsorbable element having a non-hemostatic biodegradable outer layer.

1 26. The method according the claim 19 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element within the bioabsorbable element.

1 27. The method according the claim 19 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element at a generally central location within the bioabsorbable element.

1 28. A biopsy localization method comprising:  
2 taking a tissue sample from a biopsy site within a patient;  
3 positioning a bioabsorbable element at the biopsy site;  
4 testing the tissue sample; and  
5 if the testing indicates a need to do so relocating the biopsy site by finding the  
6 bioabsorbable element by locating inflammation at the biopsy site caused by the  
7 bioabsorbable element.

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1 29. The method according to claim 28 wherein the positioning step is carried out  
2 using said bioabsorbable element and a radiopaque marker.

1 30. The device according to claim the 29 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a permanent marker element.

1 31. The device according to claim the 29 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a temporary marker element.

1 32. The method according to claim 28 wherein the remotely visualizing step is  
2 carried out to by at least one of ultrasound, mammography and MRI.

1 33. The method according to claim 28 further comprising the step of selecting the  
2 bioabsorbable element so that after positioning at the target site, the bioabsorbable element  
3 has a hardness of at lease about 1.5 times as hard as the surrounding tissue.

1 34. The method according to claim 28 further comprising the step of effectively  
2 preventing blood from contacting the bioabsorbable element until the bioabsorbable element  
3 is positioned at the target site, the effectively preventing step being carried out by using a  
4 hemostatic bioabsorbable element having a non-hemostatic biodegradable outer layer.

1 35. The method according the claim 28 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element within the bioabsorbable element.

1 36. The method according the claim 28 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element at a generally central location within the bioabsorbable element.

1 37. A biopsy localization method comprising:  
2 taking a tissue sample from a biopsy site within a patient;  
3 positioning a bioabsorbable element at the biopsy site;  
4 testing the tissue sample; and

5 if the testing indicates a need to do so relocating the biopsy site by finding the  
6 bioabsorbable element by following a bioabsorbable thread, the thread extending from the  
7 patient's skin to the bioabsorbable element.

1 38. The method according to claim 37 wherein the positioning step is carried out  
2 using said bioabsorbable element and a radiopaque marker.

1 39. The device according to claim the 38 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a permanent marker element.

1 40. The device according to claim the 38 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a temporary marker element.

1 41. The method according to claim 37 wherein the remotely visualizing step is  
2 carried out to by at least one of ultrasound, mammography and MRI.

1 42. The method according to claim 37 further comprising the step of selecting the  
2 bioabsorbable element so that after positioning at the target site, the bioabsorbable element  
3 has a hardness of at lease about 1.5 times as hard as the surrounding tissue.

1 43. The method according to claim 37 further comprising the step of effectively  
2 preventing blood from contacting the bioabsorbable element until the bioabsorbable element  
3 is positioned at the target site, the effectively preventing step being carried out by using a  
4 hemostatic bioabsorbable element having a non-hemostatic biodegradable outer layer.

1 44. The method according the claim 37 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element within the bioabsorbable element.

1 45. The method according the claim 37 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element at a generally central location within the bioabsorbable element.

1 46. A biopsy localization method comprising:  
2 taking a tissue sample from a biopsy site within a patient;  
3 positioning a bioabsorbable element at the biopsy site;

4 testing the tissue sample; and  
5 if the testing indicates a need to do so relocating the biopsy site by finding the  
6 bioabsorbable element by remotely visualizing the bioabsorbable element.

1 47. The method according to claim 46 wherein the positioning step is carried out  
2 using said bioabsorbable element and a radiopaque marker.

1 48. The device according to claim the 47 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a permanent marker element.

1 49. The device according to claim the 47 wherein the radiopaque marker element  
2 is a temporary marker element.

1 50. The method according to claim 46 wherein the remotely visualizing step is  
2 carried out to by at least one of ultrasound, mammography and MRI.

1 51. The method according to claim 46 further comprising the step of selecting the  
2 bioabsorbable element so that after positioning at the target site, the bioabsorbable element  
3 has a hardness of at lease about 1.5 times as hard as the surrounding tissue.

1 52. The method according to claim 46 further comprising the step of effectively  
2 preventing blood from contacting the bioabsorbable element until the bioabsorbable element  
3 is positioned at the target site, the effectively preventing step being carried out by using a  
4 hemostatic bioabsorbable element having a non-hemostatic biodegradable outer layer.

1 53. The method according the claim 46 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element within the bioabsorbable element.

1 54. The method according the claim 46 further comprising the step of placing a  
2 marker element at a generally central location within the bioabsorbable element.